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PROPOSAL TO THE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION HANDLING COMMITTEE:

REQUIREMENT TO PRODUCE ELECTRICAL PRECIS OF HARD COPY INTELLIGENCE REPORTS

Formats Subcommittee

Chairman

IHC Executive Secretary

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I. INTRODUCTION - One of the most serious information handling problems facing the members of the Intelligence Community today is capturing the massive amount of hard copy material with which we need to deal. We can build the most sophisticated SAFES and [] which do marvelous jobs in providing relevant information to analysts in seconds, but they will be totally incomplete without the hardcopy material. We are still forced to hand distribute, file, and retrieve millions of pages of printed documents each year. Even if we had the manpower to do this job effectively, we would still be losing out by having a limited retrieval and research capability. The only current alternative is for each recipient agency to have analysts read each document and prepare abstracts for their machine retrieval systems, trying to capture in a few minutes all the pertinent points and keywords. This type of effort is obviously expensive and too slow to meet the needs of intelligence analysts in today's world.

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II. PROPOSAL - The ultimate solution to this problem is to receive all information in an electrical form. Unfortunately, we have no control over the means by which much of the information we need is circulated. We can encourage some commercial publishers to provide their information electronically, but we cannot change the fact that much of what we need will be in the printed form. There is one very major portion of the information we use that we do have control over - INTELLIGENCE REPORTS.

Therefore:

1. The Intelligence Community should adopt a requirement that all of its reports be transmitted electrically whenever possible. The only exceptions should be reports that are very long or that must include graphic presentations.
2. For those reports that are put out in hard copy because they are too long or include graphics, it should be required that a summary or precis be issued electrically. The precis would be in the standard format adopted for all intelligence reports circulated electrically among the national level agencies.
3. Certain very sensitive report series (those normally given a name only distribution) would be exempted from these requirements.

III. SUMMARY - if this proposal is adopted, much more of the information we must handle can be mechanized. It will be available to analysts faster and retrievable at a much deeper level of detail. It would significantly reduce manual distribution loads and human indexing efforts.

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It would also mean that all intelligence reports would be contained in our retrieval systems. An analyst would not have to go to several different places to find all the items pertinent to a specific problem.

The precis would be the indexing mechanism for hard copy reports. They would also serve as an advance alerting device for hard copy reports that are in the printing and distribution channels. If the precis is prepared by the author of the hard copy report at the same time, the cost would be very low and the benefits would be high.

IV. SAMPLES

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